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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/235,686	01/22/1999	ANN XIAOAN LIU	AC06105	4330

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EXAMINER

JACKSON, MONIQUE R

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1773

DATE MAILED: 04/19/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/235,686

Applicant(s)

LIU ET AL.

Examiner

Monique R Jackson

Art Unit

1773

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 January 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9, 11, 12, 16, 26-29, 33-35, 39, 45, 46 and 48-62 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9, 11, 12, 16, 26-29, 33-35, 39, 45, 46 and 48-62 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Art Unit: 1773

### DETAILED ACTION

1. The amendment filed 1/25/05 has been entered. New claim 62 has been added. Claims 1-9, 11-12, 16, 26-29, 33-35, 39, 45-46, and 48-62 are pending in the application.

2. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

3. Claims 1-9, 11-12, 16, 26-29, 33-35, 39, 45-46 and 48-62 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Albrinck et al (USPN 5,456,949) in view of the admitted prior art and in further view of Takahashi et al (USPN 5,928,778) or Merriam (USPN 3,661,673) or *Microspheres: Microspheres Engineered for a Wide Choice of Unique Enhancements* by 3M and Zeelan Industries, Inc. (3M and Zeelan).

4. Albrinck et al teach a damage resistant high pressure decorative laminate having excellent scratch, mar, scrape and abrasion resistance, as well as excellent appearance and cleanability and methods of producing same (Abstract.) The method of producing the decorative laminate includes impregnating a decorative alpha-cellulose paper with a coating formulation comprising melamine-formaldehyde resin with abrasion resistant particles having a particle size of about 15 microns to about 45 microns suspended in the coating formulation (Abstract; Col. 5, line 63 - Col. 6, line 5.) The abrasion resistant material is preferably alumina with the concentration of alumina particles in the resin coating formulation dependent upon the amount of surface area which needs to be covered, however for sufficient damage resistance, the concentration should be about 8-12 grams per square meter of surface area (Col. 5, lines 3-8.) The alumina particles can be precoated with an amino silane coupling agent (Col. 5, lines 8-10.)

Art Unit: 1773

The resin impregnated decorative sheet is then further coated or saturated with an overcoat of a “neat” melamine formaldehyde resin coating formulation which does not contain any abrasion resistant alumina particles or in the alternative contains abrasion resistant particles that are smaller than the particles used in the first coat (Abstract; Col. 6, lines 14-20.) The damage resistant decorative laminate may be produced either with or without an intermediate drying step between the initial coating and the subsequent overcoat (Col. 6, lines 28-32.) The coated decorative paper and at least one backing sheet is dried and then heat and pressure consolidated using conventional laminating techniques into a damage resistant high pressure decorative laminate having excellent scratch, mar, scrape and abrasion resistance as well as a uniform appearance and excellent cleanability (Col. 6, lines 33-38.) Albrinck et al further teach that conventional high pressure decorative laminates are made of two essential layers, a core layer and a surface layer, wherein the core layer normally consists of a plurality of cellulosic sheets generally made from a kraft paper impregnated with a laminating resin (Col. 1, lines 19-25.) Placed above the core layer is the decorative layer which is generally an alpha cellulose paper impregnated with a melamine-formaldehyde resin (Col. 1, lines 31-35.) The laminates are used as surfacings for counter tops, table tops, furniture, store fixtures, etc. (Col. 1, lines 65-66.)

5. Albrinck et al do not specifically teach the temperature and pressure at which consolidation is performed however, as admitted by the Applicant as prior art, it is well known in the art that high pressure laminates are produced at a temperature of 230-340°F and a pressure of 800-1600 psi (Page 3, lines 1-10.) Additionally, it is well known in the art that these laminate films are typically used as surface material for materials comprising wood, for non-limiting

Art Unit: 1773

example, particle board, medium density fiberboard, composite panel and other wood-based materials (Page 2, lines 8-11.)

6. Albrinck et al also do not specifically teach that the abrasion resistant particles are microspheres or substantially spherical, are present in an amount of about 0.5 to 4.75% of the thermosetting resin after drying, and provide a scratch resistance of at least about 2.5 Newtons as measured by the Teledyne Taber Scrach Tester. However, Takahashi et al teach the use of spherical particles in a thermosetting coating for a decorative article wherein Takahashi et al specifically teach that the spherical shape of the particles provides greatly improved abrasion resistance as compared with particles in an indeterminate form made of the same material, and, at the same time, produces the following characteristic effects: the spherical particles do not wear a coating applicator used, the hardened coating layer also does not wear those things which are brought into contact with the coating layer, and the coating layer has improved transparency (Col. 4, lines 5-15.) Takahashi et al further teach that the abrasion-resistant coating includes a crosslinkable resin and 5% to 50% by weight spherical particles having an average diameter of 3 to 50 micrometers (Abstract) and that the spherical particles have a hardness greater than the resin and may be selected from fused alumina, alumina produced by the Bayer process, zirconia, titania, organic resin particles, and preferably alpha-alumina, because alpha-alumina has an extremely high hardness and can impart high abrasion resistance to the resulting coating layer and can be readily obtainable in a spherical shape (Abstract; Col. 3, lines 5-13; Col. 4, lines 32-41.) Takahashi et al also teach that it is preferable that the hardness of the spherical particles be greater by at least 1 or more in terms of the Mohs hardness scale than the crosslinkable resin and that the spherical particles can be inorganic or organic resin (Col. 4, lines 16-28.) The abrasion

Art Unit: 1773

resistant coating can be applied to a number of substrates including paper, woodboards, particle board, medium density fiber board, FRP boards which are obtained by impregnating various fibrous substrates such as paper with a resin such as phenolic or melamine, or a composite substrate obtained by laminating two or more substrates (Col. 2, lines 1-67.)

7. Further, 3M and Zeelan teach that microspheres offer a variety of inherent advantages over many traditional irregularly shaped mineral fillers such as improved flow, lower resin demand, low viscosity/high filler loading, and reduced warpage and shrinkage (Page 2, Col. 1.) Further, 3M and Zeelan teach that ZEEOSPHERES™ Ceramic Microspheres are ideal options for hardness and abrasion resistance, gloss control, and corrosion resistance, or if you need a fine particle size filler. In particular, they teach an alkali alumino silicate ceramic microsphere which is commercially available as ZEEOSHERES W-610 and is a semi-transparent, white colored, fine particle size, high strength, high hardness ceramic microsphere. 3M and Zeelan also teach that ZEEOSPHERES™ Ceramic Microspheres can help reduce VOCs, and help improve hardness, corrosion resistance, and abrasion resistance of high solids industrial coatings.

8. In addition, Merriam teach that a surface impregnating resin comprising glass beads can provide improved abrasion resistance if the glass beads are of a substantially spherically shaped configuration as opposed to irregularly shaped particles having sharp edges or corners thereon and that the amount of the glass beads affects the resulting abrasion resistance obtained (Figure 2, Col. 3, lines 57-74; Col. 3, line 70-Col. 4, line 10.)

9. Hence, based on the teachings of Takahashi et al, 3M and Zeelan, and/or Merriam, one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have been motivated to utilize spherical particles as opposed to other shaped particles in the invention taught by Albrinck et al

Art Unit: 1773

to provide improved abrasion resistance and further to utilize routine experimentation to determine the type, size and amount of the spherical abrasion resistant particles to provide the desired abrasion resistance for a particular end use, including any of the abrasion resistant particles taught by the cited prior art.

***Response to Arguments***

10. Applicant's arguments have been fully considered but are not moot in view of the new grounds of rejection.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Monique R Jackson whose telephone number is 571-272-1508. The examiner can normally be reached on Mondays-Thursdays, 8:00AM-4:30PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Carol Chaney can be reached on 571-272-1284. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Monique R. Jackson  
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April 18, 2005